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ABSTRACT

A discussion of the current status and future of Celtic languages in the United Kingdom looks at the social and linguistic history of the languages, problems facing the community of Celtic language users, specific tensions and relationships, implications for reform of social policy, and the role of formal language planning, legislation, and key agencies in the maintenance of the languages. First, general observations about Celtic language usage, distribution, and change are made. Key long-term demographic and social trends influencing Welsh, Gaelic, and Irish are examined, including the availability of education in the languages. The role of the advancement of educational technology in the loss of minority languages is also discussed. Efforts to date by the Welsh Language Educational Development Committee to support and enhance Welsh-medium education are viewed as a promising step toward a rudimentary national education plan for the Welsh-medium sector. An increasing role for identity formation and cultural reproduction is seen in the media and its technology. The current state of language-rights legislation is reviewed, and the position of each language in terms of the five stages of language survival is sketched. A 32-item bibliography is included. (MSE)

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# THE UNITED KINGDOM'S CELTIC LANGUAGES

Colin H. Williams

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# The United Kingdom's Celtic Languages

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This is the draft of an invited contribution to Colloque International Droits Linguistiques/Droits de L'Homme, organised by Cercle René-Shickele, the Council of Europe and the European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages, 15th-17th November, 1990, Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

# The United Kingdom's Celtic Languages:

# A Socio-Linguistic Profile

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## Introduction

Until relatively recently the experience of Celtic-speaking peoples in the British state has been a history of oppression, repression, stigmatization and discrimination qua lesser-used language speakers. The 'openness' of British society encouraged 'national assimilation' and socio-political integration into an English-dominated normative order. In many respects there is still strong evidence of discrimination against such speakers today. Moreover a combination of state legislation, formal education, economic strictures and cultural compliance has produced a crisis situation for all Celtic speakers. The real surprise is that after many centuries of state integration in these islands we have any Celtic speakers left at all!

Social mobilization over the past forty years has resulted in a more promising diagnosis as to the future health of such languages. Although still in acute crisis, they do at least have the rudimentary means of being strengthened by the construction of new agencies of language reproduction and the specification of new language rights in a more comprehensive and legislative framework. The prime determinant is popular will and social pressure to realise the goals of a bilingual society in Scotland, Wales and to a much lesser extent in Northern Ireland. However,

given the complexity of modern society, the pivotal prime instrument for authorising, resourcing and regulating such goals is the state itself, hence the acute necessity of conferences such as this, to highlight the socio-political and legislative responsibilities of the state in the current European order.

In this paper I will trace the key numerical and spatial pattern of language change; emphasise some general observations on the problems facing the UK's lesser-used language communities; detail several of these problems to illustrate specific structural tensions and relationships; highlight some implications of reform for social policy and conclude with an assessment of the role of formal language planning, legislation and other key agencies in language reproduction.

General observations

1. All Celtic languages have experienced an absolute decline from a peak of recorded speakers at the beginning of this century, though, of course, the seeds of decline were sown centuries ago.

2. The territorial heartlands of these language communities have been eroded so that they offer a limited base only for the reproduction of the lesser-used language's culture. However, to all intents and purposes these core areas are the historical bastions of the cultures and are amenable to language planning policy so long as such policy is co-ordinated in a holistic sense with other regional development and environmental management considerations. Pure territorial language planning is less likely to be succesful today, therefore a judicious mixture of personality principles for exercising language rights

within specified geolinguistic contexts is likely to prove the most pragmatic means of safeguarding language reproduction and implementing language rights.

3. Very few unilingual Celtic speakers exist, despite the contrary evidence of the Census. Most so recorded unilinguals seem to be expressing a politico-linguistic loyalty to the language cause. The absolute elimination of monolingualism may cause linguistic problems in the future, but functionally nearly all Celtic language speakers in the UK are bilingual. However, there are sharp differences in the proportions reported to be able to speak, read and write Welsh/Gaelic/Irish, which has significance for their deployment in new para-public domains.

4. 'Traditional' domains for language reproduction appear to be failing as a result of the transformation of society, and the increased autonomy and mobility of individuals, in consequence we are witnessing the construction of new domains for language use eg. education, planning, the media and the law.

5. This switch in domain construction has sharpened the relationship between the languages and the state; it has necessitated a more formal interventionist role by the state to support these languages, which has been forthcoming to various degrees. However, such reforms as we have had to date have tended to be incremental, fragmented and sectoral in nature. There is no comprehensive overview of language policy at the state level, and formal language planning is only now emerging as a serious exercise of democratic rights and obligations in the Celtic regions.

6. Education has emerged as the principal new agency for language reproduction to bolster the family, local community and older agencies. However, bilingual educational provision at all levels is still fragmented and rudimentary, but there are encouraging signs of real success in this sector which promises, to be the most effective means of transmitting the languages, especially to non-native speakers.

7. Economic under-development in the past resulted in the marginalization of settled, Welsh-speaking and Gaelic-speaking communities in Y Fro Gyrmraeg and in the Gaidhealtachd. Demographic change and the continued difficulties in bringing about sustainable development in these regions vis a vis other regions of the UK and Europe more generally, highlights the central role of economic development and employment provision in maintaining settled, viable communities. This suggests a closer integration of language planning with regional development planning from a holistic perspective.

8. The media has had a pivotal role in the past in the dissemination of mass culture, now it has a fundamental role in reversing language decline and in popularizing and legitimizing values. It is thus an essential tool of democracy, but when it is used to transmit the autochtonous culture, it can serve potentially to 'transform' rather than to 'transmit' the threatened culture.

9. Modern technology is usually hailed as anathema to the survival of 'minority cultures', but recent experience in distance learning, in computer-aided education and commercial applications, and, of course, in telecommunications, suggests that there is a critical role for

technology in circulating ideas, entertainment and essential data within the lesser-used language communities. The expensive ingredient is the human resource needed to staff and develop such technological applications, but again there are encouraging signs from the UK that we are beginning to employ the latest technology to improve the delivery of key services and to bolster the threatened cultures.

## Long Term Trends

Despite its many shortcomings the Census is still the best available data source for constructing long term trends in the pattern of variation of the languages with which we are concerned in this presentation.

One need only highlight the most significant findings for there already exists quite a comprehensive literature of Gaelic in Scotland and Welsh in Wales. There is a correspondingly thinner literature on Irish in Northern Ireland, and on Cornish and Manx. In consequence I will concentrate on the implications for Welsh and Gaelic in detail and refer only briefly to the other language situations.

## Key Trends Influencing Welsh

### Numerical and Spatial Decline

In 1981 the Census recorded 503,549 Welsh speakers, 21,283 of whom were monoglot Welsh. (For cautionary remarks and analyses see Williams, 1985; Atchison, Carter and Williams, 1985). At its peak in 1911, the Welsh-speaking population numbered 977,400, 190,300 of whom were

monoglots. In crude terms this suggests a proportional loss of 25 per cent, from 44 per cent in 1911 to only 19 per cent in 1981. However, this certainly underestimates the total population of Welsh speakers, for it excludes from the analysis the very many thousands of Welsh speakers who reside (permanetly or temporarily) outside Wales. This inexorable trend of steady decline is a major factor in language reproduction and has been extensively documented (see Williams, 1980; Atchison and Carter, 1985; Pryce and Williams, 1988). (For key data trends see tables below).

This fragmentation and drift reduces the cogency of territorial identity as conventionally interpreted, and militates against the adoption of a uniformly designated territorial language region, within which citizen rights and the primacy of Welsh may be specified and sanctioned (Williams, 1982). At root the territorial basis of Welsh culture has been severely eroded during the present century, but in response to the diminution of one of the principal constituents of identity there has arisen a vigorous social defence movement. This movement has provided a new significance for the land, a new self-consciousness which has been utilized both by the agencies of central government and by the leadership of those communities who feel threatened by the developments of a centralised bureaucracy and the ever-voracious economic imperative of resource extraction and exploitation by commercial interests. In short, as I have detailed elsewhere, the land has become a new battle-ground wherein the conflict between the local and the universal, the indigenous and the exogenous interest groups become mediated (Williams, 1987). But territory, as we shall see, is not merely contextual, it is not only a scene for the playing out of socio-economic factors, it is itself a significant source of symbolic and resource power. Its possession and control is often deemed vital to the very survival of specific cultural groups. This is

## TABLE 1

**Proportion of Population Speaking Welsh, by county, 1921-1981**

| | *Percentage of all persons speaking Welsh* | | | | | | *Percentage of all persons speaking Welsh only* | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1921 | 1931 | 1951 | 1961 | 1971 | 1981 | 1921 | 1931 | 1951 | 1961 | 1971 | 1981 |
| *Wales* | 37.1 | 36.8 | 28.9 | 26.0 | 20.8 | 18.9 | 6.3 | 4.0 | 1.7 | 1.0 | 1.3 | 0.8 |
| Counties | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Clwyd | 41.7 | 41.3 | 30.2 | 27.3 | 21.4 | 18.7 | 5.8 | 3.4 | 1.3 | 0.8 | 1.4 | 0.8 |
| Dyfed | 67.8 | 69.1 | 63.3 | 60.1 | 52.5 | 46.3 | 15.3 | 9.6 | 4.1 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 1.6 |
| Gwent | 5.0 | 4.7 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 1.9 | 2.5 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Gwynedd | 78.7 | 82.5 | 74.2 | 71.4 | 64.7 | 61.2 | 28.1 | 22.1 | 9.1 | 5.2 | 4.9 | 2.6 |
| Mid-Glamorgan | 38.4 | 37.1 | 22.8 | 18.5 | 10.5 | 8.4 | 2.3 | 0.8 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 0.5 |
| Powys | 35.1 | 34.6 | 29.6 | 27.8 | 23.7 | 20.2 | 6.1 | 3.9 | 1.6 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 0.9 |
| S. Glamorgan | 6.3 | 6.1 | 4.7 | 5.2 | 5.0 | 5.8 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.2 |
| W. Glamorgan | 41.3 | 40.5 | 31.6 | 27.5 | 20.3 | 16.4 | 3.6 | 1.3 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 0.8 |

Source: Census 1981 *Welsh Language in Wales*, table 4, p. 50.

## FIG 2.4

**Dafydd Wigley's 1986 proposal for a Welsh Language Bill**

ARRANGEMENT OF CLAUSES

PART I

EQUAL VALIDITY OF WELSH AND ENGLISH IN WALES

Clause

1. Equal validity of oral and written statements in Welsh and English.
2. Rights and duties to use Welsh with and by public bodies, public authorities and public utilities.
3. Rights to use Welsh at meetings of public authorities and public bodies.

PART II

RIGHTS TO LEARN WELSH

4. Provision for public employees to learn Welsh.
5. Right to Welsh medium education and to learn Welsh at school.
6. Right to higher education through the medium of Welsh.
7. Investigation into the provision of Welsh medium education.

PART III

THE WELSH LANGUAGE IN THE COURTS

8. Right to have legal proceedings wholly through the medium of Welsh.
9. Provision in trials conducted wholly or partially in Welsh of jurors able to understand Welsh.

PART IV

LANGUAGE COMMISSIONER FOR WALES

10. Establishment of post of Language Commissioner for Wales.

[Bill 192] A 49/3

PART V

PLANNING

Clause

11. Duty for planning authorities to consider the Welsh language.

PART VI

MISCELLANEOUS

12. Translation into English of documents to the Registrar of Companies in Welsh, if necessary at public expense.
13. Validity of negotiable instruments in Welsh.
14. Unlawful prohibition of the use of Welsh.
15. Rights of persons in custody to use Welsh.
16. Naming of local authorities in Welsh.
17. Census of population.
18. Commencement.
19. Regulations.
20. Extent.
21. Definitions.
22. Expenses.
23. Citation.

TABLE 3

Usually Resident Population aged 3 and over, by age and sex 1981

| *Age* | *All Persons Aged 3+* | | | *Not Speaking Welsh* | | | *Total Speaking Welsh* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Persons* | *Males* | *Females* | *Persons* | *Males* | *Females* | *Persons* | *Males* | *Females* |
| All ages 3 and over | 2,645,114 | 1,282,524 | 1,362,590 | 2,141,565 | 1,046,248 | 1,095,317 | 503,549 | 236,276 | 267,273 |
| 3-4 | 62,436 | 32,056 | 30,380 | 54,104 | 27,804 | 26,300 | 8,332 | 4,252 | 4,080 |
| 5-14 | 406,121 | 208,032 | 198,089 | 331,300 | 171,804 | 159,958 | 74,821 | 36,690 | 38,131 |
| 15-24 | 415,880 | 211,746 | 104,134 | 352,636 | 181,170 | 171,466 | 63,244 | 30,576 | 32,668 |
| 25-44 | 703,800 | 354,384 | 249,416 | 593,998 | 299,195 | 294,803 | 109,802 | 55,189 | 54,613 |
| 45-64 | 634,278 | 308,994 | 325,284 | 502,863 | 244,760 | 258,103 | 131,415 | 64,234 | 67,181 |
| 65 and over | 422,599 | 167,312 | 255,287 | 306,664 | 121,977 | 184,687 | 115,935 | 45,335 | 70,600 |

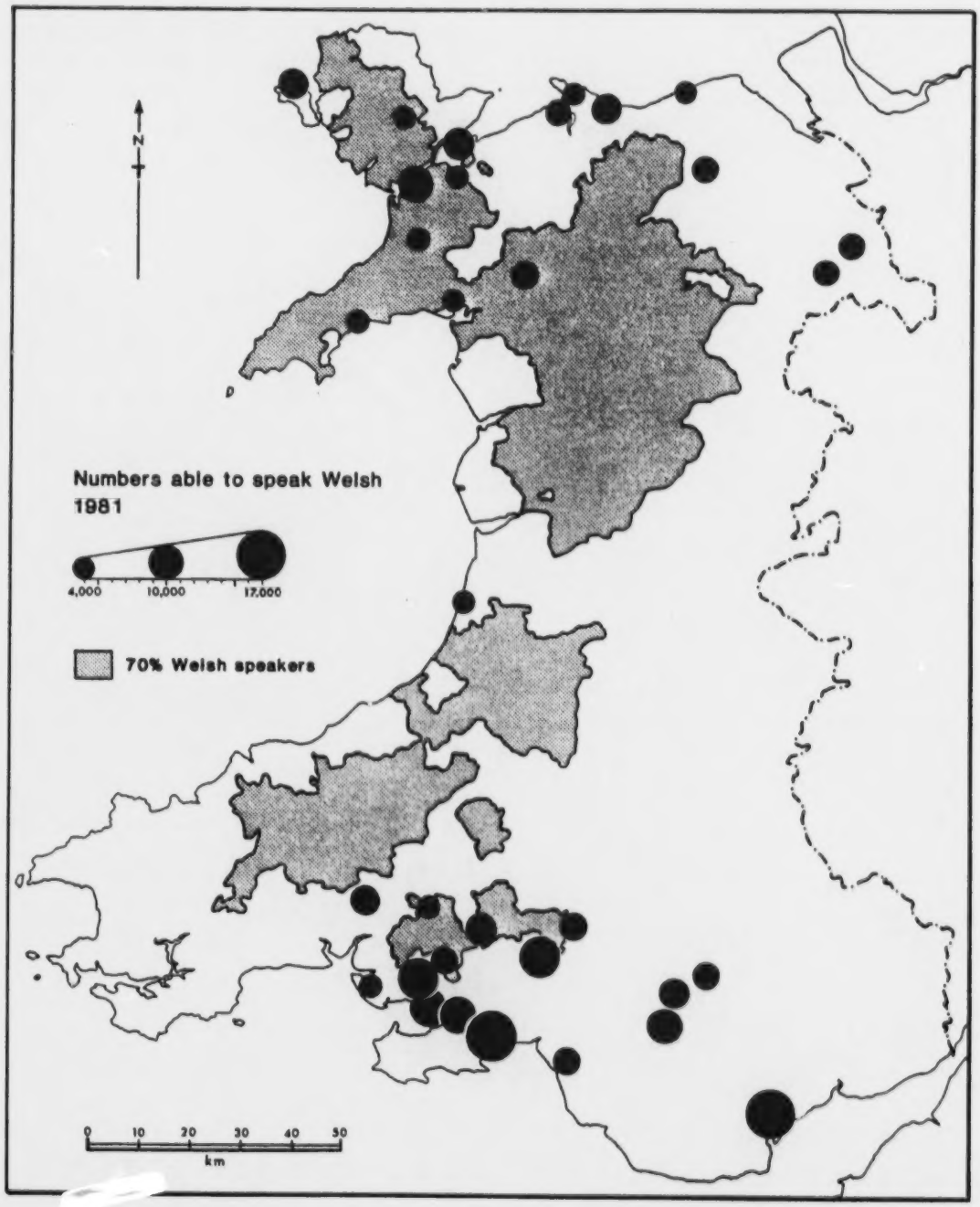
Source: Census 1981 *Welsh Language in Wales*, taken from table 3, pp. 48-49.

TABLE 4

Usually Resident-Welsh Speaking Population aged 3 and over, by age and sex 1981

| *Age* | *Total Speaking Welsh* | | | *Speaking Welsh Only* | | | *Speaking Welsh and English* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Persons* | *Males* | *Females* | *Persons* | *Males* | *Females* | *Persons* | *Males* | *Females* |
| All ages 3 and over | 503,549 | 236,276 | 267,273 | 21,283 | 10,071 | 11,212 | 482,266 | 226,205 | 256,061 |
| 3-4 | 8,332 | 4,252 | 4,080 | 1,513 | 818 | 695 | 6,819 | 3,434 | 3,385 |
| 5-14 | 74,821 | 36,690 | 38,131 | 3,028 | 1,532 | 1,496 | 71,793 | 35,158 | 36,635 |
| 15-24 | 63,244 | 30,576 | 32,668 | 2,050 | 1,056 | 994 | 61,194 | 29,520 | 31,674 |
| 25-44 | 109,802 | 55,189 | 54,613 | 3,439 | 1,756 | 1,683 | 106,363 | 53,433 | 52,930 |
| 45-64 | 131,415 | 64,234 | 67,181 | 5,356 | 2,622 | 2,734 | 126,059 | 61,612 | 64,447 |
| 65 and over | 115,935 | 45,335 | 70,600 | 5,897 | 2,287 | 3,610 | 110,038 | 43,048 | 66,990 |

Source: Census 1981 *Welsh Language in Wales*, taken from table 3, pp. 48-49.


N
Numbers able to speak Welsh
1981
4,000
10,000
17,000
70% Welsh speakers
0
10
20
30
40
50
km

why territorial loss of ownership of culture space, or the perceived 'invasion' of homelands by 'outsiders' evokes such passion, as we have seen so tragically and so very often in Europe generally.

Today the Welsh-speaking community is in crisis, for the western heartland, its mainstay over the centuries, can no longer be taken for granted. It is daily threatened by a plethora of changes which are largely outside the control of the minority population.

The territorial redistribution of the Welsh-speaking population, following broader socio-economic trends, is shaping a new geographic reality for stable bilingualism and cultural reproduction. For whilst in proportional terms, the language is still dominant in the north and west, in absolute terms the majority of Welsh speakers inhabit urban areas in industrial South Wales and along the North Wales coastline (Figure 1). The reasons for both population redistribution and the growth of a significant sector of Welsh-speakers in anglicized areas are well understood.

Processes, common to many multilingual contexts, such as the in-migration of non-native speakers, language displacement and cultural shift, the revolution in telecommunications, and access to the media, have all reduced the probability of inhabiting settled Welsh-speaking communities as a local majority.

As a consequence of these factors we can no longer define the internal linguistic divisions of Wales with such confidence as did previous generations of scholars. Most of the general factors addressed by fellow participants in this colloquium have also contributed to this re-definition of the relationship between territory and cultural

reproduction in Wales. Today, there are many gradations of Welshness in the community. Instead of talking of a 'Welsh-speaking community', it is far more realistic to talk of 'Welsh-speakers in the community', even within many parts of the heartland areas (Williams, 1989). Thus many individuals are now more autonomous, seeking language contiguity without necessarily expecting that interaction to take place within geographic contiguity.

Further the cultural influence of a social mass of Welsh speakers predisposing a new generation to reproduce the langue and the culture can no longer be taken for granted. The old domains for language reproduction no longer apply in as comprehensive a fashion. A crisis mentality has characterised this complex situation since at least the mid 'sixties when a number of social movements were established with the express aim of politicizing and radicalising the Welsh population. To a certain extent, groups such as Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, Adfer and Plaid Cymru have been singularly successful, both in placing the future of the language on the political agenda, and in being instrumental in changing attitudes and the social conditions for the reproduction of the language. In fields such as bilingual education, the media, planning and the law new domains and agencies have been constructed which have served to institutionalise Welsh within a partial bilingual society. Fundamentally, of course, such new agencies by their very nature change the relationship both between the autonomous individual and the state, at both central and local levels (Williams, 1982; 1987; 1989).

Central to this transformation is an intriguing paradox. Whether coincidental or causal, there is a real irony that at a time when the extension of Welsh into new and promising domains has been achieved there

is a corresponding territorial retreat of Welsh in former heartland areas, threatening even the possibility of there being any large scale regional or urban-based majorities in the next century. Does the diminution of a territorial identity chime the death knell of Welsh culture, or could one envisage community without propinquity and with what consequence for the survival of the culture?

Key Trends Influencing Gaelic

The same general observations made in relation to Wales are even more appropriate in the Scottish Gaelic context. Over a century of language attrition has been recorded by the census. In 1881 "habitual" speakers of Gaelic numbered 231,594 out of a population aged three and over of 3,425,151, that is 6.7%. By 1981 the corresponding figures were 79,307 Gaelic speakers, a mere 1.64% of the local population of 4,843,553 (MacKinnon, 1987, p.1). The table below illustrates the grave position of Gaelic today.

A century ago the Gaelic heartland was focussed on the Western Isles and Inner Hebrides, together with the Highland mainland, particularly in the eastern areas at Badenoch, Easter Ross and Loch Ness-side. By 1981 the Gaelic heartland had contracted markedly and contained far fewer speakers (Mackinnon, in press). Cor na Gaildhlig (1982 p.12) reports that 20% of the population aged 3+, numbering 46,578, still use the language within indigenous Gaelic areas (essentially this is defined as the H.I.D.B., less Shetland, Orkney, Caithness and Nairn). The highest concentration of speakers in proportional terms lives in the Comhairle nan Eilean local authority area, where 25,589 people (80%) of a total population of 29,492

**Table 5 Numbers and Proportions of Gaelic Speakers at Successive Censuses.**

| Census (popln. present) | Pop. 3+ | Numbers of Gaelic Speakers: Bilingual | Monolingual | Total | % of Pop. 3+ Speaking Gaelic: Bilingual | Monolingual | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1881 | 3,425,151 | (not separated) | | 231,594 | (not separated) | | 6.76 |
| 1891 | 3,721,778 | 210,677 | 43,738 | 254,415 | 5.66 | 1.18 | 6.84 |
| 1901 | 4,146,733 | 202,700 | 28,106 | 230,806 | 4.89 | 0.68 | 5.57 |
| 1911 | 4,439,602 | 183,998 | 18,400 | 202,398 | 4.14 | 0.41 | 4.56 |
| 1921 | 4,573,471 | 148,950 | 9,829 | 158,779 | 3.26 | 0.21 | 3.47 |
| 1931 | 4,588,909 | 129,419 | 6,716 | 136,135 | 2.82 | 0.15 | 2.97 |
| 1951 | 4,826,814 | 93,269 | 2,178 | 95,447 | 1.93 | 0.05 | 1.98 |
| 1961 | 4,892,822 | 80,004 | 974 | 80,978 | 1.64 | 0.02 | 1.66 |
| 1971 | 4,967,108 | 88,415 | 477 | 88,892 | 1.78 | 0.01 | 1.79 |
| (usually resident population) | | | | | | | |
| 1971 | 4,926,339 | (not separated) | | 84,601 | (not separated) | | 1.72 |
| 1981 | 4,843,553 | (Rdg,Wrtg,Spkg: 82,620) | | 79,307 | (Rdg,Wrtg,Spkg: 1.71) | | 1.64 |

Sources: 1881 Gaelic Return, 1891 Census Part I, Table I, 1961-81 Gaelic Reports

Source: Mackinnon, 1987.

claim to be Gaelic-speaking. This represents 28.5% of the Scottish total of Gaelic-speakers. Comparison with the 1971 figures for the Highland Region is afforded by reference to Table 6. Argyll and Bute District of Strathclyde Region contained 6,408 speakers, 10.5% of a total population of 61,263. The rest of Strathclyde recorded 19,692 speakers, a mere 0.9% of its total population, but significant in terms of the national Gaelic total. The remaining Gaelic-speakers, c.15,833 are dispersed throughout Scotland with a peak in the capital, Edinburgh, of 3,739 speakers (Cor na Gaidhlig, 1982, p.102).

Census evidence suggests that Gaelic has achieved a plateau of relative stablility in the period 1961-1981, (1961 - 80,978, 1.6%; 1971 - 88,415, 1.8%; 1981 - 82,620, 1.7%). The most significant finding of the 1981 census is the stablisation of the Gaelic population in the Western Isles and the reduction in the trend of decline in Skye and Lochalsh, Argyll and Bute. New institutional bases for language reproduction, as detailed below, will have a critical role in strengthening this plateau of stability in the future. However of particular significance is the fact that in 1981 the civil parishes where over 75% of the population could speak Gaelic comprised only 15% of all Gaelic speakers. The vast majority therefore were dispersed, and there is current concern that unless formal planning is instituted to secure the socio-economic survival of the Gaelic communities then there may be no predominant Gaelic communities in existence at the turn of the century.

Migration to the lowlands and abroad has been a prime feature of language shift, but even within the lowland communities there have been signs of some revival of interest in the language especially among young people. A detailed picture of these patterns of decline is available in a series of

TABLE 6

HIGHLAND REGION:

GAELIC LANGUAGE - MAINTENANCE 1971-1981

| WESTERN AREAS | USUALLY RESIDENT POPULATION AGED 3 YEARS AND OVER IN 1971 | GAELIC SPEAKERS IN 1971 | | USUALLY RESIDENT POPULATION AGED 3 YEARS AND OVER IN 1981 | GAELIC SPEAKERS IN 1981 | | NO.OF GAELIC SPEAKERS IN 1981 AS A % OF NO. IN 1971 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | No. | % | | No. | % | |
| N & W SUTHERLAND | 3475 | 1183 | 34.0 | 3312 | 847 | 25.6 | 71.6 |
| WESTER ROSS | 3864 | 1620 | 41.9 | 4756 | 1437 | 30.6 | 88.7 |
| S.W.ROSS | 2337 | 918 | 39.3 | 2372 | 794 | 33.5 | 86.5 |
| I.OF SKYE | 6918 | 4593 | 66.4 | 7150 | 4312 | 60.3 | 93.9 |
| W.LOCHABER | 3246 | 1073 | 33.1 | 3448 | 904 | 26.2 | 84.2 |
| WESTERN AREA AGGREGATE | 19840 | 9387 | 47.3 | 21038 | 8294 | 39.4 | 88.4 |
| EASTERN AREAS | | | | | | | |
| CAITHNESS | 26376 | 394 | 1.5 | 25817 | 342 | 1.3 | 86.8 |
| S & E SUTHERLAND | 9379 | 626 | 6.7 | 9121 | 521 | 5.7 | 83.2 |
| EASTER ROSS | 28647 | 1115 | 3.9 | 37880 | 1668 | 4.4 | 149.6 |
| INVERNESS TOWN | 34774 | 2248 | 6.7 | 36675 | 2532 | 6.9 | 112.6 |
| INVERNESS LANDWARD | 11280 | 834 | 7.4 | 15301 | 876 | 5.7 | 105.0 |
| BADENOCH & STRATHSPEY | 8274 | 347 | 4.2 | 9033 | 301 | 3.3 | 86.7 |
| NAIRN | 8983 | 139 | 1.5 | 9278 | 162 | 1.7 | 116.5 |
| E.LOCHABER | 14082 | 2215 | 15.7 | 14733 | 1936 | 13.1 | 87.4 |
| EASTERN AREA AGGREGATE | 141795 | 7918 | 5.6 | 157838 | 8338 | 5.3 | 105.3 |
| HIGHLAND REGIONAL TOTAL | 161635 *(161641) | 17305 (17296) | 10.7 (10.7) | 178876 | 16632 | 9.3 | 96.1 (96.2) |

*(From reformatted S.A.S. regional table)

Source:Mackinnon,1987.

publications by Mackinnon, (1978, 1986, 1987 in press), James, (1988); and Withers, (1988), among others.

Let me elaborate upon the paradox. Despite a partial language revival in the past thirty years, there is a real danger that without language planning, technological assistance and political support, the opportunities for speaking Welsh and Gaelic even in traditional core areas will diminish daily; as the demographic and linguistic composition changes and, as the demands of the modern economy threaten to displace Welsh and Gaelic as a language of the workplace and of wider social interaction.

A new critical aspect of language spread is how languages under threat are mounting a counter-spread campaign to engage new speakers in the language community (for examples see Dorian, 1989; and Williams, 1989).

Critical to this response has been the pivotal role of education and technology. In the past the control of education and technology by the state and by powerful vested interests, guaranteed the anglicization of Wales, Scotland and to a lesser extent, Ireland also (Williams, 1988). Today, however, aspects of modern technology have been employed in the language struggle of Celtic Britain, with some success.

## Education

### Gaelic-medium education in Scotland

Education is the most significant instrument for language maintenance. The Scottish experience of bilingual education has been fragmented and limited until very recently when real signs of progress and success began to emerge in this sector. Substantive developments in the provision of Gaelic-medium education may be traced from the adoption by Comhairle nan Eilean of a bilingual policy in 1975. Education was hailed as the pivotal element in the Western Isles policy, and with joint sponsorship from the Scottish Education Department the council set up a Bilingual Education project to develop a curriculum and infrastructure for primary level education. By September 1981 the project involved 34 of the 60 primary schools in the islands and had demonstrated the feasibility of constructing a bilingual educational programme. However, an independent assessment of the project did highlight several of the difficulties involved in such a programme, principally the wide variation in the practice of each school towards such issues as 'learner education', selective concentration on specific aspects of the curriculum eg. Gaelic Language Arts, Environmental Studies; the relationship between parents and schools, and the lack of appropriate materials and resources, and mixed-language ability instruction; familiar enough problems in bilingual education for lesser-used language communities.

Limited success only has been achieved in pressing for Gaelic-medium secondary education. A more worrying aspect at present was the requirement that all pupils should study at least one modern European language, besides English, during the four years of compulsory secondary

education. Activists feared the eclipsing of Gaelic by other languages. however, representation to the Scottish Education Department led to an amendment whereby pupils in S3 and S4 could "pursue Gaelic or any other language as their sole language apart from English" where schools can make such provision. Inevitably this is an unsatisfactory position for Gaelic on two counts. First, such adoption will depend very heavily on the good will, resource levels and priorities of the headteacher and governors, rather than being a statutory right, and secondly, there is still concern that the increased curricular pressure will marginalize Gaelic, especially considering the lack of similar provision for pupils in S1 and S2 (Comhairle na gaidhlig, 1989, p.5). Allied to this, of course, is the perennial shortage of suitably qualified teachers, although increased provision of teacher training in Northern College, Aberdeen and Jordanhill College, Glasgow is heartening.

The most promising development is at the Nursery/Playgroup level, where the work of Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Araich (Gaelic Playgroup) has expanded since the first Gaelic playgroup was established in Oban in 1981. There are now 70 nursery groups serving 1,200 children in 1990. The medium-term expectation is that another 250 nursery groups, with around 4,300 children, will be established, as the principle of mother-tongue education at this pre-school level becomes more widely diffused. Adult education provision is also growing, though at a much slower rate. The focus for activities in this sector is Sabhal Mor Ostaig (a College of Further education) at An Teanga, Skye, established in 1983 and currently providing a diverse curriculum to meet the needs of the Gaidhealtachd.

Table 7 Gaelic-medium education by region.

| Region | Playgroup | Mother and Toddler | Nursery | School |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Western Isles | 21 | 4 | 7 | 3 |
| Highland | 14 | 6 | 3 | 6 |
| Strathclyde | 8 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Grampian | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Tayside | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Lothian | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 47 | 13 | 14 | 14 |

Source : HIDB Annual Report,1989,p.40.

Rudimentary educational provision thus characterises the Scottish situation with notable initiatives auguring a more promising future prospect, chief of which are

1. "The allocation by the SED of specific grants for Gaelic education,
2. the spread of Gaelic units in primary schools in response to parental demand,
3. the establishment of a strand of Gaelic tertiary education at Sabhal Mor Ostaig,
4. increasing inter-authority co-operation on such elements of Gaelic provision as in-service training and resource development;
5. growing awareness by authorities other than Comhairle nan Eilean, Highland region and Strathclyde, of a demand for Gaelic educational provision;
6. the identification, in a report by CNAG's Education Officer, of a serious shortfall in resources, in terms of teaching staff, training facilities for them, and materials for the task in hand.
7. the establishment of the Inter-Authority Standing Group on Gaelic Education". (Gaelic Progress Report, 1982-1989, p.6).

Irish-medium education in Northern Ireland

Political intransigence, since the transfer of educational responsibilities to the Northern Ireland Ministry of Education in February 1922, has characterised official attitutdes towards the use of Irish as a medium of education. L.S. Andrews (1990, p.5) has suggested that in 1922 some 380 Catholic primary teachers had a qualification in Irish and that the subject was taught in 177 schools, ie. 24% of the teachers in 23% of the Catholic primary schools. In terms of the

provincial educational system this amounts of 4% of teachers in 8% of the schools. Initial gains in the prominence given to Irish in the school curriculum were soon lost as successive legislative reforms curtailed both the range and availability of Irish as a taught subject. Negative language policy sought to distance the Catholic community from Irish, as the government interpreted the language as a subversive symbol of Irish Nationalism. In pursuing its policy of cultural assimilation Irish was given a very restricted place in the School curriculum in the period 1933 to c. the early 1980s.

Formal Irish-medium education in Northern Ireland started with a community-supported school on land belonging to the Shaw's Road Irish Community in Belfast and by 1977 had a total enrolment of 30 (Andrews, p.13). An Irish-medium playgroup was established in 1978, dealing with c.100 children per day, and other such playgroups now exist in Belfast and beyond. In 1984 the Department of Education granted maintained status to Bunscoil Phobail Feirste in Belfast, but refused to support a second school, Gaelscoil na bhFal, because it occupied premises which the government contends are used by paramilitary organisations. In consequence the school moved to a new site and is likely to receive more favourable governmental consideration. There is another independent Irish-medium primary school at Newry.

A pressing issue at present is concern that Irish is not part of the core curriculum at primary level, and is in danger of being marginalised as an optional subject in most English-medium primary schools. Andrews (1990, p.15) comments that at the secondary level, Irish has equal status with French, German, Spanish and Italian (at stages 3 and 4), but schools "must guarantee a place for one of the above continental languages in the

curriculum before Irish may be offered". Recently the government has adopted a more positive stance in the teaching of Irish. In May 1988 a working group was established by the Department of Education to advise on Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study required for Irish in Irish-medium primary schools as part of the common curriculum, and to advise on teaching Irish in English-medium schools. It also stressed the need to initiate comparative research and the transfer of educational methods from other contexts eg. Wales and Ireland. The government backed desk-top publishing and an Irish-medium resource unit, and is currently considering the principal recommendations of the Irish Working Group Report published in February 1990: viz

1. "The establishment of special units in the Northern Ireland Office and in the Department of Education to ensure that Irish and its associated heritage were given their proper place in the development of education policy.

2. "the appointment of Irish language officers with similar functions in third level institutions, in school management and in key areas of local educational administration; and

3. the creation of an institution dedicated to Irish-medium education that would support the development of schools, improve teaching standards and produce much needed texts and resources in Irish".

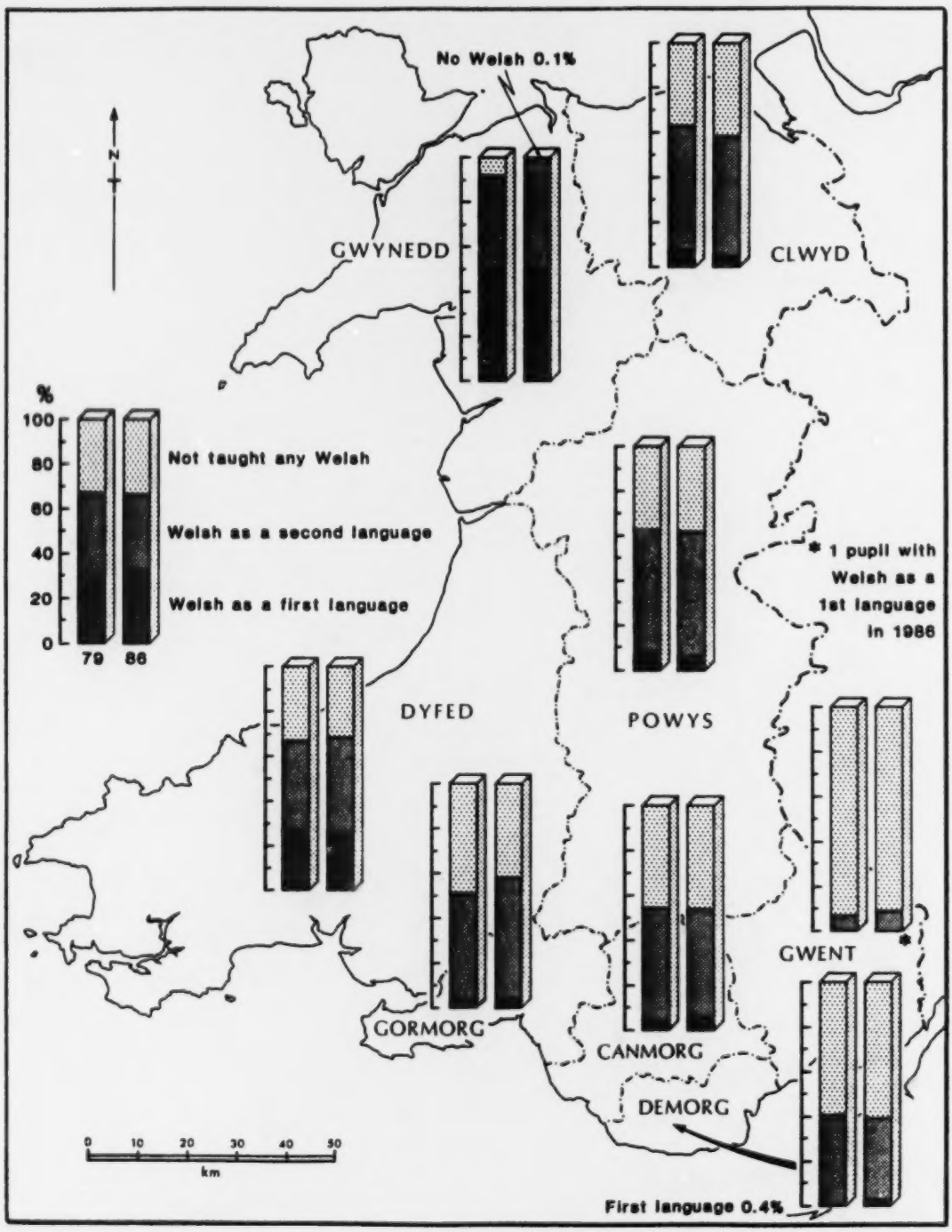
In consequence the report "opens a new era in the history of education in Northern Ireland by initiating for the first time ever an open dialogue between government and people on the future of Irish in the education system" (Andrews, 1990, p.16).

It remains to be seen to what extent and with what effect such recommendations will be implemented, for the infra-structure to support the Irish language is very limited. However, the government's new attitude was further exemplified by the launch of the Ultach Trust, in March 1990, which received an initial payment of £50,000 to promote the Irish language and its cultural heritage in Northern Ireland. There is a promise of further financial support, a small beginning admittedly, but a significant initiative which signals the legitimate place of Irish in a wider government programme for the people of Northern Ireland.

Welsh-medium education

By comparison with Ireland and Scotland there is a very well developed literature on the Welsh experience of bilingual education (Baker, 1985, Williams, 1988). There is a firmly established and well respected system of Welsh-medium education from the nursery level to University level. In October 1990 some 600 Nursery Schools were in operation together with a further 362 'Child and Mother' Groups who between them taught 13,000 children. This is an essential platform for the development of Welsh-medium education which has experienced remarkable growth since its inception in 1971.

At the primary level some 33,174 pupils are being taught in classes where Welsh is the sole or main medium of instruction, and a further 5,802 where Welsh is used in first and second language teaching. 15,582 second language pupils are in classes where some of the teaching is through the medium of Welsh. In total this gives 54,558 or 20.6% of the national total of 264,445 primary pupils in 588 schools where Welsh is used, to a


No Welsh 0.1%
N
GWYNEDD
CLWYD
%
100
80
60
40
20
0
79
86
Not taught any Welsh
Welsh as a second language
Welsh as a first language
* 1 pupil with Welsh as a 1st language in 1986
DYFED
POWYS
GWENT
GORMORG
CANMORG
DEMORG
0 10 20 30 40 50
km
First language 0.4%

greater or lesser extent, as a medium of education out of a national total of 1,746 primary schools. At the secondary level, there are 70 schools which use Welsh as a first and second language, 10 Welsh first language only and 128 where it is used as a second language. Only 24 schools do not teach any Welsh at all, a remarkable reversal of the situation barely thirty years ago. Clearly there are also difficulties in this sector of education, as well as opportunities, and in this paper I will concentrate essentially on educational technology's impact and upon the creation of a national educational forum for planning and policy as discussed below.

## Educational Technology

"One dramatic change in society in the last twenty years has provided an acid test for a minority language. When information technology, micro-computers, home and school computer based learning software, satellites and interactive video discs have begun to transform society, a minority language and culture is under threat" (Baker, 1987, p.5). Roberts has recently asked several critical questions about the role of mass technology in threatening cultural survival in general and Welsh-medium education in particular. For example, "does the arrival of advanced technology, overwhelmingly backed by English language software, in a predominantly Welsh medium classroom influence the linguistic ethos of the class? ... Do children associate high technology with English culture and equate Welsh culture exclusively with eisteddfodic gamboling in cerdd dant and cynghanedd? ... Will children, armed to the teeth with keyboards and modems and technological knowhow switch out of the local 'parochial' culture?" (Roberts, 1987, p.55).

Of course, this is a repetition of the fears engendered by the intrusion of English a century earlier when the then technologically-advanced process of print capitalism flooded Welsh homes and schools with pamphlets, newspapers and textbooks. The reaction then was to adopt the principles of mass technology and construct a parallel Welsh-medium popular press, denominational literature, and eventually educational texts and materials. I am not underestimating the difficulties involved in this paralleling process merely alerting to the fact that the abiding threat of the technology of a mass culture can also be used as a spur to action by activists within the minority culture. Research by Baker (1984, 1985) found that the microcomputer was being used almost entirely in English within the formally designated Welsh-medium schools. (Secondary Schools reported 97% usage in English; Primary Schools 86%). In an attempt to reverse this process a Welsh Panel of the Microelectronics Education Programme was formed in April 1984, three years after the establishment of the DES funded national body, charged with disseminating information, promoting curriculum development, serving as a link within the Welsh computer network, and advising MEP (Wales) on future activities a in-service training (Roberts, 1987, p.57). Despite meagre funding and limited backing, the panel achieved a great deal in its three-year limited life viz it provided a Welsh version of the MRP Primary Software package, it rationalised the translation INSET packages on mathematics, languages, infants, problem-solving, published a software catalogue, produced a range of technical terms, later adopted by the Welsh Joint Education Committee for the use of examination candidates, and provided a national forum for education (Roberts, 1987, pp.57-8).

However, such initiatives, which are so characteristic of the dynamism of bilingual education in Wales were also ephemeral and partial because of the absence of a permanent, national educational body.

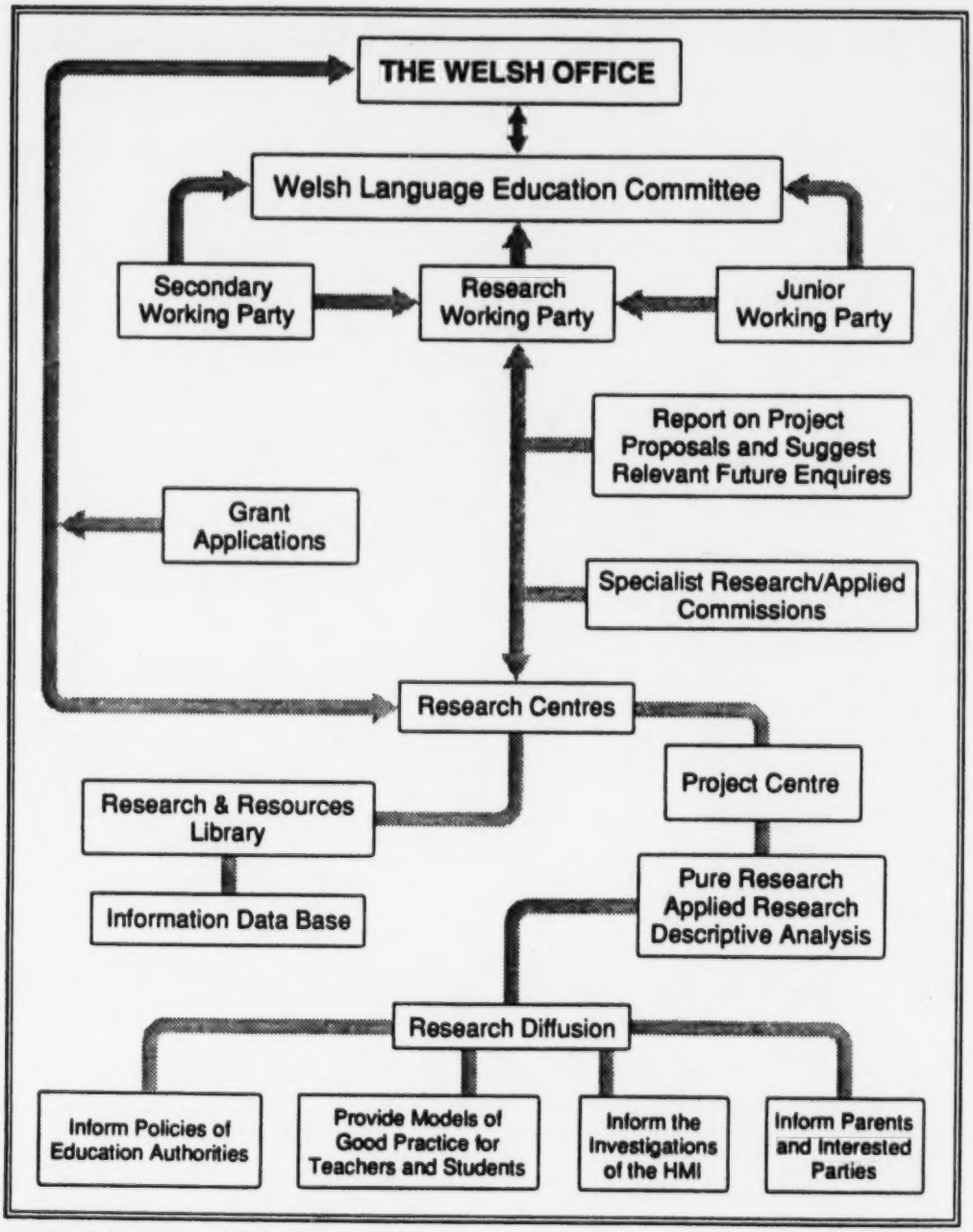
In recognition of the growing need to provide just such a national forum, the Pwyllgor Datblygu Addysg Gymraeg (Welsh Language Educational Development Committee) was established in 1987 (Williams, 1989). It was given a five-fold task, namely:-

1) to provide a forum to discuss Welsh language education policies;
2) to identify needs for development, priorities among those needs and means of meeting them;
3) to co-ordinate developments in Welsh language education in order to ensure the optimum use of available resouces;
4) to provide information and publicity;
5) to designate areas of research and development (PDAG, 1988; Jeffreys, 1989).

It quickly recognised that if Welsh medium education was to prosper three requirements had to be met urgently. First the establishment of a large data bank which would contain comprehensive listings of key research findings in bilingual education and evidence of various educational practices and systems in bi- and multi-lingual societies. Secondly it determined the need to undertake an audit of all Welsh medium teaching in respect of staffing levels and curriculum development. Thirdly it sought to collate analytical evidence of good teaching practice and patterns, representative models of Welsh medium instruction and significant materials which could be distributed nationally using new video and computer-based technology.

The Welsh office provided an interim grant to develop three centres located at the Language Studies Centre, Bangor, the Aberystwyth Resources Centre at the University College of Wales, and the National Language Unit, Treforest. An extention of these and other centres was envisaged in the PDAG final report, for they were each deemed to provide specific services in one of the following areas: teacher training; textbook and educational publishing for schools, including computer software; fundamental and applied research on education, bilingualism and language development.

In essence then, we have the promise of a rudimentary national educational plan for the Welsh-medium sector (figure 2). Central to this plan is educational technology, with each participating school using its computer links to obtain Welsh-medium materials, hard copies, and interactive teaching programmes provided by the national educational centres. The speed, economies of scale, and quality of materials thus obtained will ensure a vast improvement on the former, rather fragmented and ad hoc system of education. In addition, national standards of competence in spoken, written and read Welsh, in various subject areas, may be enhanced by such technology. Were these provisions to be extended into the significant sector of further and higher education, then this central agency of language reproduction would be a very effective user of distance-learning technology, as has been proven by the Open University, the Open College, and BTEC.


THE WELSH OFFICE
Welsh Language Education Committee
Secondary Working Party
Research Working Party
Junior Working Party
Report on Project Proposals and Suggest Relevant Future Enquires
Grant Applications
Specialist Research/Applied Commissions
Research Centres
Project Centre
Research & Resources Library
Information Data Base
Pure Research Applied Research Descriptive Analysis
Research Diffusion
Inform Policies of Education Authorities
Provide Models of Good Practice for Teachers and Students
Inform the Investigations of the HMI
Inform Parents and Interested Parties

Proposed Structure of Educational Research
(Source: PDAG 1989.)

The Media

For decades, members of Europe's linguistic minorities have been calling for greater access to, and control over, the mass media for they long recognised that the media, together with education and public sector administration and the law, were the institutional bases for cultural reproduction. The Arfe Report adopted by the European Parliament in 1981, and the Kuijpers Resolution of 1987 have reinforced this perspective, leading to a more formal emphasis on the provision of the requisite infra-structure for lesser-used languages to be represented within the mass media. However, as we are all too painfully aware, guaranteeing access to the media is often a sensitive and politically volatile move. Such variance from a norm of national congruence is highly suspect by the controlling majority, for as Sartre reminds us 'To speak Basque is a revolutionary act'. The values, ideas and messages imparted through a lesser-used language circulation network are often (though not necessarily so) at variance with those of the state's majority, hence the intransigence to establish communication systems in the lesser-used languages.

Yet, without access to the media, which overarches space and distance, and re-combines, and re-unites disparate speakers, it is doubtful if relatively weak and embattled linguistic communities can survive well into the next century.

However, the role of the media within lesser-used languages is less well understood. Ned Thomas (1989) has recently reported to the European Community on several features of the development of mass communication systems with lesser-used language communities. I quote the more salient

characteristics of his report below for they point to a number of anomalies.

1. "Media in a given language provide the forum within which shared experience and shared problems are discussed, often from very different standpoints. Outsiders in the majority group often perceive a minority as having a single, monolithic, highly politicized stance and many resist the establishment of media in the minority language, fearing that the air-waves will be dominated by a single point of view. Media are an essential part of democracy in whatever language or size of language they operate. Indeed in those areas of the EC where literacy in the lesser-used language is poor because of past discrimination in the education system, radio and television in their own language can have the special function of admitting to the spoken democratic debate people who are neither very fluent in the state language nor very literate in their own" (p.4).

This is an important justification for the role of the media, especially in multilingual societies generally, as within Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. The transition to democracy is a fragile enough phenomenon for strong cultures, for the weaker it could pose a further threat as I have alerted elsewhere, for

> "If the new cultural order of 'unity in diversity' is to become a reality in the future Europe, then much greater attention to the implications of 'development from below'...(including mass technology and access to the media)...needs to be stimulated; otherwise participatory democracy in the new Europe will be yielded to the tyranny of the majority in the name of progress and development, the

watchwords of the centralising state and of its dominant elite" (Williams, 1990, p.244).

Thomas also argues that "the long-established traditions of music, song and poetry can be perpetuated and find a large audience through the media. But they rarely survive media treatment in their untouched original form. Culture is not being 'preserved' but 'transformed' when it is carried into the electronic media" (p.4).

Herein lies another ambiguity inherent in modern technology. When set aside the professional products of an international telecommunications industry, the home grown productions of a regional or national system are apt to appear dated, parochial and unsuitable for mass consumption. This is even more acute when such productions are originated by the majority culture, either as a sop to minority interests, or to highlight the idiosyncratic and peculiar nature of a minority culture.

"The folklarization and museumization of a minority culture are much more likely to occur when highly traditional cultural products of the minority are embedded in programmes made within majority languages, and presented as changeless objects for the study and curiosity of others" (p.5). An excellent example of this is the treatment of Old Order Amish communities within the contemporary United States.

A further feature is the economic aspect of the development of the mass media, both in terms of job creation in a diverse set of related occupations and in the export potential of televisual material. This is a vital feature if members of the minority community are to be employed in the private, commercial sector where too often the language is excluded.

This clearly has important social psychological, language status planning and behavioural implications for a specialized division of labour within the lesser-used language community. The media not only transmit material, they also help establish new norms, new domains and new perceptions which seek to extend the hitherto restrictive domains of most languages (Thomas, 1989, p.6; Williams, 1989, p.46-48).

This question of legitimization of new domains and identity reformulation is crucial, but can so often be perceived as being of parochial interest only. Hence the globalization issues discussed in this paper are of profound consequence. Thomas makes a telling point when he argues that if the media in lesser-used language is able to provide a mix of local, regional, national and international material then they can be an "important means of internationalizing the consciousness of their own group. That is an important function, for just as no culture can survive without institutions of its own, so no culture can survive as an autarchy, impervious to outside influence. If cultures are unique, they are so because each culture stands at a unique cultural crossroads, not on a unique cultural island" (p.6).

Such considerations suggest an ever increasing role for technology in identity formation and cultural reproduction. Specific examples of the success achieved by determined minorities would include radio and broadcasting in Catalonia, Euskadi and Wales.

Television Broadcasting

The statutory provision relevant to the Fourth Channel in Wales were contained in the Broadcasting Act of 1981. The Welsh Channel was an independent authority responsible not to the IBA, but via the Home Office to Parliament. Its first transmission was on November 1st 1982 and since then is has established itself as a central agency for the transmission of Welsh culture and as a reflector of Welsh social life. S4C operates a partnership with BBC, HTV and independent producers as programme suppliers. This is turn has not only spawned a plethora of programmes but also new training and career opportunities for a wide variety of occupations, further strengthening the utility of Welsh in new domains. Currently some 27 hours of Welsh medium programmes are broadcast per week, but inevitably as the average number of English language hours taken from Channel Four has risen from 47 hours per week in 1984 to a projected 134 hours per week in 1990/91 the Welsh proportion has dropped steadily from 32.7% in 1984 to an estimated 16.7% in 1991. S4C's estimated expenditure for 1989/90 was £51.5 million, of which programme cost account for c.88% of total funds and operating costs some 9.5% (S4C, 1989). S4C audience

research suggests that the service reaches c.80% of the total potential Welsh-speaking viewers, and c.55% of all viewers in Wales.

Its principal problems in the short to medium term are a gradually reducing share of advertising revenue;, increased competition form new channels eg. C5 and C6; increasing penetration of satellite broadcasts; and an ever difficult search for new talent and the maintenance of the highest standards of performance and broadcasting skills.

Apart from seeking to broadcast to both Welsh and English speakers in Wales, S4C is also active at an international scale in co-oeprative arrangements with overseas television services and independent producers. It is particularly active in the European Broadcasting Union in relation to the influence of new technology on small-scale counntries and lesser-used language communities, and with a decade of experience to date is instrumental in diffusing information and practice on minority broadcasting elsewhere in the world.

In Scotland, the broadcasting of Gaelic-medium programmes is less well developed. Currently the BBC, STV and particularly Grampian cover the regions but at a relatively modest level and with little real power to act as a safeguard for the language.

Recently as a result of strong lobbying the government has announced an £8 million injection of capital for independent Gaelic-medium broadcasting and this is interpreted as a significant filip to the extension of Gaelic in new domains. If the Welsh experience is used as a base, then new opportunities both for programme development and career development will strengthen the role of Gaelic. In addition to obvious entertainment and

current affairs broadcasting, the television service could be an important boost to distance learning Gaelic-medium education and therefore act as a catalyst to the wider spread of Gaelic in Scotland in time.

Language Rights

The Irish language has no specific legislation pertaining to it within Northern Ireland. Neither has Gaelic in Scotland received much official legislative protection, save inclusion of Gaelic as a qualification for British nationality in the 1981 Nationality Act.

By contrast Wales has a more developed practice of legislating for the use of Welsh in certain, restricted domains, and is currently engaged in a lively and vigorous debate on the formulation of a new and more comphrehensive Welsh Language Act.

The modern legislative basis for recognition of the Welsh Language came with the Welsh Courts Act of 1942 and the Welsh language Act of 1967. These were the first explicit acts dealing with language in Wales since the Laws in Wales Acts (Acts of Union) of 1536 and 1542 forbade the use of Welsh in the affairs of state. The limitations of the 1967 Welsh Language Act have been recognised recently by the re-formulation of two contending Welsh language bills, proposed by Davies and Wigley in 1986. Reference to the six section headings of Figure 2.4 suggests the range of Wigley's proposal for a Welsh Language Bill. I have discussed the implications of such legislation elsewhere (Williams, 1989) and drew attention to three significant considerations. First, the existing Acts and proposals do not constitute a comprehensive enough basis for the full realisation of the

principle of equal validity of Welsh and English; secondly, that the proposal for a Language Commissioner for Wales should involve more than a regulatory role as a linguistic ombudsman. Following the Canadian experience such an officer should also be empowered to act as a linguistic auditor to oversee complicance with the Act, and "as a promoter of language quality", he/she should be "empowered to take initiatives to further language reform". Before a Welsh linguistic ombudsman could handle complaints and recommend reforms, there would have to be a new Welsh Language Act. Such a Bill would have to specify the minimum expectations as to the availability of bilingual services to the public, the language of work in the public and private sector, and opportunities for the full participation of Welsh speakers in the diverse field of education, broadcasting, administration, the law and health and social services. the Third consideration, given the geolinguistic diversity of Wales, is whether such rights are conditional upon where one resides in Wales; that is, is there to be a territorial qualifier as to when and where citizens may expect to exercise such proposed rights? Theoretically, the personality principle of language rights should obtain in a new, comprehensive Welsh Language Act. However, the practical difficulties in implementing such provision may predispose some to argue that satisfying 'significant demand' in language services may lead to a two-tier division, with, for example Gwynedd and Dyfed, enabled to implement a full range of rights in all domains, and other parts of Wales exercising selective initiatives only.

Currently a new round of discussions has been sparked off by the creation of the Welsh Language Board, which is currently drafting a new Welsh Language Bill, due to be announced by Christmas 1990. It is envisaged that the principal feature will be a re-assertion of the necesssity to

legislate for the principle of equal validity of Welsh and English, which though suggested by the Hughes Parry report of 1965 was not fully enacted in the 1967 legislation. In addition it is likely that a wider remit will be pressed for a permanent government body, entitled The Welsh Language Board, which would have the following responsibilities:

(1) "In furtherance of its general duty the Board shall have the following additional duties -

(a) to keep under review the state of the Welsh language in Wales;

(b) to advise the Secretary of State with regard to the Welsh language;

(c) in accordance with directions given from time to time by the Secretary of State, to co-ordinate the provision by government departments of financial or other assistance relating to the Welsh language; and

(d) to investiage any matter referred by the Secretary of State to the Board and to report to him on any such matter;

(e) to provide a conciliation service in respect of complaints referred to the Board in relation to the use or the non-use of Welsh;

(f) to advise government departments, local authorities and other public bodies as to the use of Welsh in public administration;

(g) to formulate and publish guidelines as to the use of Welsh in administration, commerce and all other fields of activity and from time to time to review and if the Board thinks fit to withdraw or revise any such guidelines;

(h) to discharge the functions conferred to imposed by this Act otherwise than by this section." (Welsh Language Board, 1990).

# Language Survival

1 **Idealism :** the construction of a vision of a fully rehabilitated 'threatened' language; this is the issue of making language and nation coterminous.

2 **Protest :** mobilising sections of the population to agitate for a social reform/revolution in the promotion of the lesser-used language.

3 **Legitimacy :** securing a generalised acceptance of the normalacy of exercising language rights in selected domains.

4 **Institutionalisation :** ensuring that the language is represented in key strategic agencies of the state, i.e.the law, education, and public administration.

5 **Parallelism :** extending the use of the language into the optimum range of social situations i.e.the private sector, entertainment,sport and the media.

If we conceive of the language struggle in terms of five stages then it is clear that Irish in Northern Ireland is still at the second stage of protest and agitation for language consideration, Gaelic in Scotland is at the third stage of securing greater legitimacy for the extension of Gaelic into new domains and Welsh is in a transitional period of parallelism or normalisation as a fully equal comprehensive medium of communication in a bilingual society (see figure on language survival).

Let me conclude by stressing some of the implications of the discussion on place and territorial identity. The trends and issues discussed above lead to a clear conclusion. If the Welsh language is to resist marginilization it will have to break out of fairly restrictive domains and become a fully institutionalized language of society (Williams, 1989). But in order to achieve such language domain spread there needs to be a political recognition of the value of Welsh culture throughout Wales, for the guaranteeing of minority group rights in such spheres as the law, public administration and education is an expensive exercise of freedom. However, there is an acute irony that at the very time that such domain spread appears to be realized, the territorial retreat of Welsh is reaching a crisis point in the western heartland. A simple illustration of the range of pressing questions which need to be addressed before we can fully exercise any proposed new language rights is given below.

Can an autochtonous culture survive indefinitely without a clearly identified territorial resource base within which it is dominant?

Do the recent advances of technology liberate minority cultures from the confines of tradition, habit, routine behaviour and localism? Or should we more properly see technology as an adjunct to, rather than a substitute for, place-specific forms of social interaction?

Are there measurable thresholds beyond which it is both uneconomic and untenable to advance the scope and scale of technological developments for minority cultures, if the necessary infra-structure is lacking? If so, what are they and to which forms of technology do they apply? For example, would it be advisable for a minority to press for its own television channel, if the majority of its potential audience were still functionally illiterate in the minority language? Need radio and television always follow, rather than precede, comprehensive educational reform where the lesser-used language is recognised within the local system?

Should language rights be predicated primarily on the territorial or the personality principle of language planning?

What are the class implications of developing a bureaucratic-technical intelligentsia within the minority culture?

Are elitism, a new professional/technocratic intelligentsia and a burgeoning bureaucracy, the necessary progeny of the recent marriage between language activists and the local/central power brokers? We are used to treating minority languages as languages of resistance to an often uncaring or hostile state government, but we are not yet fully equipped to deal with the minority language as the language of power, of establishment positions, in short, of governance.

What role does the European Community, the Council of Europe, and agencies such as the European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages have in facilitating inter-group networking on the media, technology and cultural reproduction?

These are a few of the questions we need to address before we rush too quickly to announce the death of several European Lesser-Used Languages. I am not unmindful either of the context within which all these aspects of social change are mediated, namely the larger question of global inter-dependance and state-regulated behaviour on the one hand, and the much wider view of the influence of technology itself in shaping most aspects of our daily lives.

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